

# THE REMONSTRANCE.

BOSTON, APRIL, 1908.

The Remonstrance is published by the Massachusetts Association Opposed to the Further Extension of Suffrage to Women. It expresses the views of women in Massachusetts, Maine, Rhode Island, New York, Illinois, Iowa, Oregon, Washington, and other states who believe that the great majority of their sex do not want the ballot, and that to force it upon them would not only be an injustice to women, but would lessen their influence for good and imperil the community. The Remonstrants ask a thoughtful consideration of their views in the interest of fair discussion.

Any one who sympathizes with the aims and work of this Association, or who desires information in regard to it, will please communicate with

The Corresponding Secretary,  
Box 134, Brookline, Mass.

Massachusetts Association Opposed to  
the Further Extension of  
Suffrage to Women.

Thirty-five Branch Committees; 14,163 members in 945 cities, towns, and villages.

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## SUFFRAGE BILLS IN MASSACHUSETTS.

Two suffrage bills were introduced in the Massachusetts Legislature this year: one to confer municipal suffrage upon women on the same terms as upon men, and the other to grant municipal suffrage to taxpaying women.

The Committee on Election Laws granted a hearing upon these bills February 4. Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, Mr. Blackwell, Miss Blackwell, Mrs. Mary K. O'Sullivan, and others spoke in favor of the bills.

Charles R. Saunders, Esq., of Boston, counsel for the Massachusetts Association

Opposed to the Further Extension of Suffrage to Women, conducted the case for the remonstrants.

Mrs. J. B. Millet, of Boston, in behalf of the Association, read the following

### Remonstrance Against the Bills.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON ELECTION LAWS:

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen of the Committee, — Our Association appears once more before a committee of the Massachusetts Legislature to ask you to defend us against a measure which we believe would be injurious both to women and to the state.

We do not desire the rights of men; neither do we wish to perform their duties.

Our Association is composed of over fourteen thousand women of twenty-one years and upward. They belong to two hundred and forty-five towns and villages, from Berkshire to Cape Cod. Many of them are taxpaying women. Others are wage-earners, dependent on their daily labor either of hand or brain. They have associated themselves together simply in self-defense and on behalf of all other women whose existing rights are threatened without their own consent.

During the past year our numbers have increased, partly owing to the interest of our earlier members in asking friends to join us, but also in protest against the views of English suffragettes who have come across the sea and have devoted much time and eloquence to trying to convince American women that they are ill-used and that "if they are contented they ought to be ashamed of themselves."

Women who desired to protest against such doctrines have joined our Association in order to bear witness that they do not believe the assertion that because they have not the ballot they are treated "like paupers, lunatics, and slaves."

American men are singularly generous in all that concerns the welfare and wishes of women. Their consideration has always surprised the men of other nations. If the men of Massachusetts believed her women were

ill used and unjustly treated, they would be most anxious to change the laws for their protection.

Men will do as much for the welfare of their mothers, their daughters, and their wives as women will do for other women, and we are glad to trust our interests in the future as in the past to the men of Massachusetts.

We are told that female suffrage has been tried in Western states, and that the East should follow their example. But the people of Massachusetts rarely look westward for their laws, and certainly do not follow in the footsteps of Idaho or Utah. Before we on the Atlantic seek to imitate these suffrage states we may notice how their example affects their nearer neighbors.

The state of Washington, while still a territory, tried the experiment, and such was her experience that when she arrived at the dignity of statehood she parted company from the mining and grazing states of Wyoming, Idaho, and Utah, and placed herself with the states of higher civilization, where men are still contented to do the work assigned them under our usual form of government.

In Oregon an amendment of the constitution bestowing suffrage on women has been defeated within two years by 10,000 majority. The women organized and appealed to the men not to "mistake the clamor of outsiders for the sentiment of the home-loving women of Oregon," protesting that "such burdens should not be imposed" upon them "at the instance of female agitators from distant states where the people are too sensible to adopt woman suffrage."

Thus both the men and women of the Pacific reject the example of these neighboring suffrage states and prefer to join us on the Atlantic in relieving women of duties they do not desire and which men can better perform.

Two petitions are before this committee.

One requests suffrage for taxpaying women only. If our municipalities were conducted as business corporations whose affairs were controlled by those who pay the expenses, this proposition might have some prospect of success. But we are confident that no Massachusetts Legislature will



make a discrimination between women of wealth and wage-earners which does not exist among men.

We believe that this petition is introduced simply as an entering wedge for other suffrage measures, and is offered in the hope that it may win support from women who do not recognize so readily as men the objections to such class legislation.

The other bill demands municipal suffrage for all women. We ask you to consider the full meaning of this request.

We have in Massachusetts 33 cities, but we also have 321 towns. Many towns, especially in western Massachusetts, consist of scattered villages distant often four miles, and sometimes even more, from the town hall.

The government of towns requires something more than a ballot. The voters are required to be personally present at town meetings in order to discuss and to act upon every appropriation and every measure proposed. These meetings last often all day. In the larger towns they are held frequently in the evening. In some towns six such meetings in one year are not uncommon.

At present the man of each family attends the meeting often at considerable sacrifice. But he knows he represents his family, and his wife can remain at home, not only to attend to the children and the dinner, but often also to feed the livestock and perform other duties which usually fall to his share.

This is her contribution towards the welfare of the town by leaving him free to express the wishes of the household both by vote and voice.

Our form of town government has justly been the pride of New England, but it certainly never was intended by its founders that entire villages should be left deserted while both men and women abandoned their homes, leaving the children to put themselves to bed or into the fire as they might happen to prefer.

How would this bill affect the cities?

The government of our large cities already presents difficulties which are receiving at this time earnest consideration. The mayor of Boston has petitioned this legislature for special relief. Other cities are demanding serious changes in order to secure honest and economical administration.

Do you wish to increase these difficulties by adding to the present number of voters who need to be aroused to act wisely, a mass of women who, from the very circumstances of their lives, are far less qualified than men

to deal intelligently with business problems?

The man in his daily work and by his intercourse with other men learns much about financial affairs and the reputation of candidates, of which his wife at home knows nothing.

Question your own experience. Do the women you know often attend meetings of corporations in which they are stockholders, or do they ask their husbands or brothers to represent them? Do they themselves believe that they can decide municipal questions as wisely as the men of the same households?

We feel that to admit *all* women to vote in municipal affairs would distinctly lower the electorate, since they are less well qualified than men to deal with the problems involved.

The average woman greatly prefers to trust a man in business and public matters rather than another woman.

As taxpaying women and as citizens who desire the best conditions in the cities and towns where we have made our homes, we ask you to leave the administration of the business of those municipalities where it now belongs,—in the hands of men.

One other danger should also be remembered.

You cannot impose political duties upon women without seriously lessening their present usefulness.

Women who have the leisure and the ability are rendering valuable service both to the state and in their own localities. They are active members of town and village improvement societies. They are elected or appointed trustees of our public libraries, overseers of the poor, and trustees of city institutions for the care of paupers and of children. They serve upon school committees all over the state, where their election often has been accomplished almost exclusively by the votes of men. They are appointed by the governor on boards of industrial schools, of hospitals, of education, of charities, and of prisons.

Women are willing and ready to do this work, but they wish to continue to do it free from partisan complications.

Women now stand outside politics. We are neither Republicans nor Democrats, and therefore our suggestions in matters of education, charity, and reform are welcomed and successful. No suspicion arises that we have partisan ends to serve.

The officers of state or city do not inquire what part we have taken in their election or defeat.

The first president of our Association, Mrs. J. Elliot Cabot, was also the

first woman in the state to serve on any board of overseers of the poor. With another lady, still an officer of our Association, she was elected in 1877 by the men of Brookline, and continued in office so long as she was able to serve. Until her death she remained president of this Association, and year after year ably expressed before earlier committees of the legislature the opinions we now present.

The first woman who ever served on the Board of State Charities, Mrs. Clara T. Leonard of Springfield, has left on record arguments even more true to-day than when she first presented them to a committee of a Massachusetts legislature in 1884. Speaking from her wide experience she wrote: "Woman's power is greater without the ballot or possibility of office-holding for gain. It is of vital importance to the integrity of our charitable and educational administration that it be kept out of politics. Is it not well that we should have one sex who have no political ends to serve and can fill responsible positions of public trust?"

With the added experience of twenty years we now renew her appeal.

We believe it is for the welfare of women and for the best interests of the state that we should preserve our present freedom and exemptions and that we should leave to men the duties which have been imposed upon them by the wisdom of our forefathers and the laws of the Commonwealth.

MASSACHUSETTS ASSOCIATION OPPOSED TO THE FURTHER EXTENSION OF SUFFRAGE TO WOMEN.

By Mrs. G. HOWLAND SHAW,  
President.

**Mrs. Henry M. Thompson, of Lowell,** Was introduced as one who, at the head of an organization of over two hundred women, had had long practical experience in civic and benevolent work in Lowell. Mrs. Thompson said:

I speak to you as a convert from woman suffrage, as when first casting my vote for School Committee it was with a feeling of performing a great and good work. It took just three years for my eyes to open and plainly see that the vote of woman was but a two-edged sword in the hands of politicians, to be taken up by one party when the other was napping, only to be laid aside for a while when both parties were awake to its possibilities.

An opportunity came for me to become an active agent in promoting



a reform greatly needed in our public schools. To my great surprise, men who were considered rather unprincipled politicians not only welcomed my help but aided me in every way, saying they were only too glad to have some one else undertake what they were powerless to perform. This convinced me that had I but the courage and energy for the work I was more independent and free *without* the ballot than with it.

Women to-day constitute a powerful force for good could they be made to value and appreciate their privileges. Quick to see and act, persistent and aggressive, they are born reformers, especially when reforming the men!

Change all this, swallow up the intelligent and unintelligent alike in the vortex of politics, and what has been gained?

We have been asked to-day, why we come year after year to remonstrate. It is because the petitioners continue to petition, causing needless expense to the state, and using up much valuable time.

Would it not be possible to arrange in some way that *any* cause that has come before the legislature year after year, — for say twenty-five years, — without any apparent gain, should be given a rest of five years? If the petitioners could have time to study and appreciate their privileges, possibly they would cease to clamor for their "rights."

**Miss Frances J. Dyer, of Boston,**

For many years an editor of the *Congregationalist*, subsequently pastor's assistant in one of the largest churches in Boston, and now in charge of a department of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, who formerly favored woman suffrage, said:

An overwhelming majority of both men and women are firmly opposed to woman suffrage. This cannot be due to ignorance, for a vigorous campaign of education in its favor has been carried on for more than a generation. Few subjects have been more persistently brought before the public, yet the appeal to intelligence has had little effect. The appeal to self-interest has equally failed. Wealthy women taxpayers and impecunious women wage-earners alike have been told over and over again of the advantages which would accrue to them from voting. If this is true, why are more than 95 per cent of the women of Massachusetts so blind to their own

interests? They are not usually slow to accept whatever privileges they can grasp. No such reluctance was shown when the discussion arose whether women should receive as liberal an education as men, or whether they should enter the industries and professions on the same footing. And yet, with their larger equipment of education, their wider horizon of thought and interest, their broader experience in public affairs, with constant and fervid appeals to their reason, their self-interest, their duty to the public, and to every other noble motive, this large majority of women still remain convinced that women can do better work for the community at large by not becoming partisans in the turbulent strife of politics. They are just as actively engaged in all matters of moral reform and civic betterment as the suffragists. But they have found that appeals to the male voters based upon motives for the general good carry more weight if presented apart from affiliation with political parties. It is significant also that distinctively religious work, like that carried on by our great missionary societies, has been projected and is still prosecuted almost exclusively by those who are opposed to woman suffrage.

**Mrs. A. J. George, of Brookline,**

Who has long been active in educational work, and who, like Miss Dyer, was formerly in favor of woman suffrage, said:

A few zealous women wish to force all women into politics, forgetting that the average woman is already occupied with duties that require all her time. It is wrong to burden nine tenths of the women with political duties for which they have no training. Of the 5,000,000 wage-earning women in the United States, one third are less than twenty-one and could not vote anyway, and one half are less than twenty-five years of age. These workers are constantly leaving the ranks of the wage-earners to form their own homes. So the question is, "Should the average woman have the burdens of political life thrust upon her in addition to those of which she cannot be relieved?" To say No is simply to conclude that the state has greater need of women as non-political factors than as additional partisans.

**Charles R. Saunders, Esq., of Boston,**  
Formerly Representative in the Legislature, and afterwards Chairman of

the Board of Election Commissioners of Boston, said:

The taxpaying suffrage bill proposes to re-establish for women the old tax qualification for men, the last vestige of which was stricken from the Constitution of Massachusetts in 1891 by 90,000 majority. It has been settled once for all in Massachusetts that it is the man and not the house or the horse that votes. As to "taxation without representation," no phrase in political discussion is used so often with less comprehension of its real meaning. When Otis, Adams, and Hancock used those words, they used them with reference to the action of the British Parliament in imposing taxes on the colonies without allowing any one representing the colonies to have a seat in Parliament and state their needs. And such taxation as that was tyranny. But nothing was further from these men's minds than that every individual paying a tax should, in consequence of such payment, have the right to vote. Why, these were the very men who, a few years later, framed the Constitution of Massachusetts, in which they limited the suffrage to male persons. That shows our forefathers did not mean by "taxation without representation" what the suffragists would have us believe they meant, and it is unfair to try to mislead people into the belief that that old rallying cry has any application to the woman suffrage question of to-day.

The payment of taxes and the right to vote have no connection whatever. A man may own property in half a dozen places in the state, but he can vote in only one, — the place of his residence. Minors are fully taxed on their property, and so are aliens, but neither class can vote. This theory that taxation and voting go together would lead directly to the establishment of a government based on property, in which each person would be given votes in proportion to the tax he paid. Massachusetts seventeen years ago finally declared that the right to vote rests on an entirely different foundation from the possession of property and the payment of a tax.

Municipal suffrage for women includes voting on the license question. Seventy-five per cent of the cities and towns of Massachusetts vote No-license now, by the men's vote. Would it conduce to law and order to carry such overwhelmingly license cities as Boston, Fall River, Lowell, Lawrence, and Springfield No-license by the votes of the women?



Mr. Saunders showed a temperance map of the United States, on which the woman suffrage states of Wyoming, Idaho, and Utah stood alone, with Montana and Nevada, of the whole forty-six, as undisputed territory of the saloon — a singular result if woman suffrage was really a force for temperance.

As showing that the real interest of Massachusetts women is in other fields of activity than the suffrage, Mr. Saunders pointed out that, whereas 700,000 women in Massachusetts were qualified to register to vote for School Committee, the number actually voting throughout the state fell from 18,483 in 1906, to 13,619 in 1907. In Boston it had fallen from 19,940 in 1888, to 7,665 in 1907. In 189 towns in Massachusetts last year where 3,068 women were registered as voters not one woman voted.

#### Report of the Committee.

THE Committee on Election Laws, reported, February 19, "leave to withdraw" on both bills. The vote in committee against the municipal suffrage bill was 8 to 3; against the taxpaying municipal suffrage bill, 9 to 2.

#### Rejected by the Legislature.

THE municipal suffrage bill was defeated in the House, February 26, on a rising vote, 30 to 99. Only twenty-two members rose in favor of a roll call and as thirty are required, no roll call was had. Eight representatives, — Duane of Waltham, Holman of Attleboro, Coleman of Nantucket, Pope of Leominster, White of Brookline, Keefe of Fall River, Walker of Brookline, and Dean of Wakefield, spoke for the bill; and three, — Knight of Boston, Pierce of Revere, and Garcelon of Newton, spoke against it.

The taxpaying municipal suffrage bill was rejected *viva voce*, some of the members who had voted for the other bill declaring that they could not favor such class discrimination.

It is interesting to compare the vote on the municipal suffrage bill this year with votes in the House upon similar bills since 1894. In 1894 the House passed a municipal suffrage bill, 122 to 106, but the bill was defeated in the Senate. In 1895, the vote was 97 in favor to 137 opposed; in 1900 it was 40 to 132.

In the Senate, March 2, the adverse reports of the committee were accepted, in concurrence with the House, without debate or a division.

#### THE CONTEST IN OREGON.

A WOMAN suffrage amendment to the constitution of Oregon is to be again submitted to the voters at the approaching election in June. The Oregon Association Opposed to the Extension of Suffrage to Women has filed an argument against the amendment, which will be mailed to every voter in the state, under the provisions of the new law. The argument cites the following ten reasons against the amendment:

Because suffrage is to be regarded not as a privilege to be enjoyed, but as a duty to be performed.

Because hitherto the women of this state have enjoyed exemption from this burdensome duty, and no adequate reason has been assigned for depriving them of that immunity.

Because conferring suffrage upon the women who claim it would impose suffrage upon the many women who neither desire it as a privilege nor regard it their duty to seek it.

Because the need of America is not an increased quantity but an improved quality of the vote, and there is no adequate reason to believe that woman's suffrage, by doubling the vote, will improve its quality.

Because the household, not the individual, is the unit of the state, and the vast majority of women are represented by household suffrage.

Because the women not so represented suffer no practical injustice which giving the suffrage will remedy.

Because equality in character does not imply similarity in function, and the duties and life of men and women are divinely ordered to be different in the state and in the home.

Because the energies of women are engrossed by their present duties and interests, from which men cannot relieve them, and it is better for the community that they devote their energies to the more efficient performance of their present work than divert them to new fields of activity.

Because political equality will deprive women of special privileges hitherto accorded them by the law.

Because suffrage logically involves the holding of public office, including jury duty, and office-holding is inconsistent with the duties of most women.

The argument is signed by the following prominent women of the state:

Mrs. R. W. Wilbur, Portland; Mrs. F. M. Wilkins, Eugene; Miss Eleanor E. Gile, Portland; Mrs. Thomas Thompson, Pendleton; Mrs. F. M. Warren, Portland; Mrs. J. N. Lane, Pendleton; Mrs. A. E. Rocky, Portland; Mrs. E. L. Marshall, Pendleton; Mrs. Herbert Holman, Portland; Mrs. R. E. Norton, Pendleton; Mrs. Elizabeth B. Hamilton, Portland; Mrs. F. J. Bailey, Hillsboro; Mrs. Perry H. Raymond, Salem; Mrs. W. R. Yookey, Ashland; Mrs. Thomas Coates, Tillamook; Mrs. George Flavel, Astoria; Mrs. J. H. Templeton, Prineville; Mrs. F. E. Harlow, Troutdale; Mrs. W. A. Howe, Carlton; Mrs. L. Gerlinger, Dallas.

#### MEN'S WORK AND WOMEN'S.

"GIVE us the vote," cried one of the suffrage leaders at Albany this winter, "and we shall stamp out tuberculosis!" Just how she did not say. What a cool ignoring there was in that speech of the magnificent, self-sacrificing work of men! What a cool assumption of superior power, wisdom, and skill! But such assumption of sex superiority is the daily pose of the suffragist; without it her argu-

ment would fall to the ground, and she knows it.

The plain truth is, the anti-suffragist believes in men; she believes there are quite as many men as women qualified to uphold the highest standards of action, quite as many men as women inspired by a desire to improve social conditions.

She believes that without the vote the best women can be of service to the best men, throwing the weight of their authority and influence to put the best people in the majority. If the vote comes to women, not only the best women will have something to say, but all women, and the anti-suffragist does not believe the influence of all women to be necessarily nobler or purer than the influence of all men. — *Mrs. Annie Nathan Meyer, in the New York Times for March 23, 1908.*

#### A SMALL CONCESSION IN MICHIGAN.

THE Michigan Constitutional Convention, January 29, refused, by a vote of 57 to 38, to incorporate woman suffrage in the proposed constitution. As a slight concession to the petitioners for woman suffrage, the convention added a clause which provides that, on any question submitted to the voters which involves the direct expenditure of public money, or the issue of bonds, women who are taxpayers shall be permitted to vote. This is about as small a concession as could well have been made, since it affects only a small number of women, and then only on the extremely rare occasions when such questions as described are submitted to vote.

#### SUFFRAGE "SHELVED" IN ENGLAND.

A WOMAN suffrage bill identical with the one which was rejected last year was voted on in the House of Commons, February 28. An agreement was reached beforehand, under which the opponents of the bill consented to allow a vote to be taken, on condition that the promoters of the measure should agree to have the bill referred to a committee of the whole House, the effect of which is to "shelve" the bill for the session. Under this arrangement, 271 votes were cast for the bill, and 92 against it. As the House of Commons has 670 members, the noisy and strenuous campaign of the "suffragettes" seems far enough from reaching any practical result.